



**JAN SUMRALL**  
DISTRICT NO. 1

**ROSE RODRIGUEZ**  
DISTRICT NO. 2

**LARRY M. MEDINA**  
DISTRICT NO. 3

**JOHN COOK**  
DISTRICT NO. 4

**DANIEL S. POWER**  
DISTRICT NO. 5

**PAUL J. ESCOBAR**  
DISTRICT NO. 6

**LUIS G. SARIÑANA**  
DISTRICT NO. 7

**ANTHONY COBOS**  
DISTRICT NO. 8

**SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
FEBRUARY 21, 2003  
6:00 P.M.**

The City Council met in special session at the above place and date at 6:05 p.m. The following Council Members were present: Rose Rodriguez, John F. Cook, Daniel S. Power, and Anthony Cobos. Absent with notification: Jan Sumrall and Luis Sariñana. Late arrivals: Larry M. Medina and Paul J. Escobar.

**AGENDA**

**Public Hearing**

An Ordinance of the City Council of the City of El Paso, Texas, calling a Special Election for the submission of Charter Amendments to be held within the City, making provisions for the conduct of the Election and other provisions incident and related to the purpose of this ordinance.

Ms. Richarda Duffy Momsen, City Clerk, opened the meeting and read the agenda into the record.

Mayor Raymond C. Caballero explained that the purpose of the meeting was to take public comment on the proposed Charter Amendments and stated that the date of the election had not yet been confirmed.

Ms. Rita Rodriguez explained that a draft was already available that included all the Council Members directions.

The following individuals commented:

1. Ms. Lisa Turner, citizen, spoke on the importance of the City Charter Amendments and requested the issues be studied further. She requested that the election be held in November 2003 to allow for further study of the issues.
2. Mr. Jim Przepasniak, City librarian, spoke in opposition of making the librarians unclassified leaving them with no recourse under the Civil Service Commission. He also requested that the election be held in November 2003.
3. Mr. Frank Delgado, City employee, spoke in opposition to making some positions unclassified and also spoke in regards to provisional appointments. He requested that the protection of the Civil Service Commission not be taken from any City employees.

Motion made by Representative Cook, seconded by Representative Power and unanimously carried to allow Mr. Delgado an additional two minutes to speak.

4. Ms. Yvonne Jimenez, Extension Services Administrator for the El Paso Public Library, spoke in opposition to making the librarians unclassified and suggested the creation of a Committee to explore recruitment of professionals.
5. Mr. Eddie Miranda, legal counsel for the City Employee Pension Fund Board of Trustees, speaking for the Board, addressed a proposed amendment, not listed in the ordinance, regarding the Fire and Police Pension Fund. He noted that at this time, the City Employee Pension Fund was not asking for financial assistance, but that if it needed to do so in the future, it would like the same consideration that may be shown to the Fire and Police Pension Fund.

Motion made by Representative Cook, seconded by Representative Power and unanimously carried to allow Mr. Miranda an additional two minutes to speak.

6. Mr. Dryden Smith, retired City employee, spoke in opposition to making some positions unclassified and to having four-year terms for Mayor and Council.
7. Mr. John Roybal, retired City employee, spoke in opposition to a Council/Manager form of government.
8. Mr. Gary Backus, current City employee, Accountant III, spoke in opposition to making the accountants unclassified. He added that the Civil Service Commission's appeal process protects accountants in doing their jobs with integrity.
9. Ms. Susan Austin, citizen, commented on the pros and cons of having a City Manager.
10. Mr. Rafael Gardon, current City employee, spoke in opposition to making some positions unclassified. He also spoke about incentive pay and appealing to the Civil Service Commission.
11. Mr. Dusty Rhodes, former City representative, spoke in favor of four-year term of office and the ten-year consecutive term limit. He also spoke in favor of raising the salaries for Mayor and Council and the Council/Manager form of government.
12. Ms. Carmen Stanfield, City employee, spoke in opposition to some professional positions being unclassified.

Mayor Caballero explained that one reason for the proposed change to unclassified positions was not to get rid of people but to pay people more competitive wages.

Mr. Charlie McNabb, Chief Administrative Officer, explained the rationale behind the staff amendments. He stated it was true that the proposal was to remove some professional positions from Civil Service Commission for recruitment reasons, not to remove people arbitrarily. He stated he had held an unclassified position for 25 years and currently he held the highest position within the City, all without the assistance of Civil Service Commission protection. He understood that many of the proposals had hit employees without any notification, and he stated that he believed the process should be prolonged, as employees had not had sufficient notice regarding the proposed amendments. He confirmed that a proposal for alternate appeals did not exist, except in the case of City Department Heads.

Representative Cobos spoke in opposition of removing employees from classified service and requested that the election be held in May 2003.

Representative Escobar spoke in favor of a November election to allow City employees and voters the time and opportunity to understand the amendments. He noted that if something is done for the uniformed employees' fund, something needs to be done for the non-uniformed employees' fund as well.

Representative Power spoke in favor of an election in November 2003 in order to disseminate information. He concurred with Representative Escobar's comments on doing something for the non-uniformed employees' fund, as well.

Representative Cook spoke in favor of a May 2003 election only for the proposals regarding the change to a Council/Manager form of government, the change of terms of office, and the increase of salaries for Council Members.

Representative Medina stated he was in favor of Charter elections in May, but now believes there is not sufficient time to educate the voters. Holding an election in November 2003 would allow the City to share costs with the County. He asked that an Ad Hoc Committee be formed in order to dissect the Charter to include public comments and City employee feedback.

Representative Rodriguez commented on the need to educate the public immediately, regardless of when the election would be held.

Motion made by Representative Medina, seconded by Representative Cook and unanimously carried to adjourn this meeting at 7:10 p.m.

APPROVED AS TO CONTENT:

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Richarda Duffy Momsen, City Clerk